



Friends of the St. Clement's Island and Piney Point Museums
38370 Point Breeze Road
Colton's Point, MD 20626



The Finer Points

A newsletter from the Friends of the St. Clement's Island and Piney Point Museums

Fall 2021

The mission of The Friends of The St. Clement's Island and Piney Point Museums is to raise funds in order to support historical interpretation, education programs and special needs of the sites managed by the Museum Division of St. Mary's County Department of Recreation and Parks.

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The Friends of the St. Clement's Island
and Piney Point Museums
38370 Point Breeze Road
Colton's Point, MD 20626
301-769-2222

Special Edition: Benjamin Hance Historic Marker Ceremony A Success



Leonardtown, MD—

On November 1st, 2021, approximately 250 people gathered at the Old Jail Museum in Leonardtown to participate in the Benjamin Hance Historic Marker Unveiling Ceremony hosted by St. Mary's County Recreation and Parks Museum Division in partnership with the Equal Justice Initiative. The day itself was symbolic, as November 1st is Maryland Emancipation Day and marks when Maryland issued a new state constitution on November 1, 1864, becoming the first state south of the Mason-Dixon line to abolish slavery by a vote of the people and not by executive decision.

The historic marker sheds light upon a terrible deed: in 1887, Benjamin Hance, a young African American man, was arrested on May 27 in Leonardtown and taken to the Old Jail. A mob broke in on the night of June 17, held the jailkeeper at gunpoint, and removed Mr. Hance from his cell after breaking down the door. They carried him to a site

Membership Levels

- Individual (\$40)
- Family (\$60)
- Heritage (\$125, includes N.A.R.M. benefits)
- Patron (\$250)
- Benefactor (\$500)

Business Membership is now available with extended year round advertising benefits. Contact hillary.neben@stmarysmd.com for information.

Friends Membership Form

- New Member
- Membership Renewal
- Gift Membership

Name/Business Name: _____

Point of Contact: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Membership Level: _____

Payment Method: Checks should be made out to *The Friends*.
Please call 301-769-2222 to pay via VISA or MasterCard.

Thank you for your support!



just out of town (now occupied by the Port of Leonardtown Winery and park) and proceeded to hang him from a witch hazel tree. An ensuing inquiry into the lynching failed to identify or convict members of the alleged mob of any crimes, and the case was subsequently dismissed, justice having not been rendered.

Karen Stone, Manager of the St. Mary's County Museum Division, explains the importance of the day: "Mr. Hance's story is not an easy one to hear. But we do these things to remember, respect, and honor a man who should not have lost his life in the way he did. Mr. Hance deserved justice; he deserved a trial; he deserved what he never got. By bringing light to this difficult story, we memorialize Mr. Hance and all those who suffered similar fates with hope for a better future." The marker is two-sided in traditional blue with yellow letters. One side tells Mr. Hance's story; the other is a statement about racial justice. The marker is available for viewing any time outside the Old Jail Museum.

A reception followed an emotional, heartfelt ceremony focused on justice and reconciliation. Special thanks is due to The Equal Justice Initiative, The Commissioners of St. Mary's County, The St. Mary's County Bar Association, The St. Mary's County Department of Recreation and Parks, Students and Faculty of St. Mary's Ryken High School, The Friends of St. Clement's Island and Piney Point Museums, The MD Lynching Memorial Project, The Town of Leonardtown, The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, The Unified Committee for Afro-American Contributions, St. Mary's County Libraries, Michael Blackwell, Barbara Thompson, and SMECO for contributing to the ceremony and Just Society scholarship program.



Museum Store News

The Legend Of Moll Dyer Special Package

Each year the Friends of St. Clement's Island Museum create a holiday ornament to highlight the membership and our mission of support to the St. Mary's County Museum Division.

This year's ornament was so inspiring we created other merchandise to feature and are offering a bundle price. Enjoy for yourself or give as a gift, our Legend of Moll Dyer Special Package. 5 items celebrating the infamous 17th century Moll Dyer Legend.

Includes:

- Book-Moll Dyer and Other Witch Tales of Southern Maryland by local author Lynn J. Buonviri,
- Moll Dyer Friends 2021 Ornament
- Moll Dyer Decal
- Moll Dyer Die Struck Metal Magnet
- Moll Dyer Die Struck Clutch Pin.



The legend- Blaming difficulties from crop failure to sickness on witches was common in Colonial times, even here in St. Mary's County. Local resident Moll Dyer was accused of witchcraft and chased from her burning home by a mob during a brutal winter storm in 1697. It is said she rested on a large stone before she died, leaving her hand indentations behind. Local legend says her spirit haunts the land, and that the Molly Dyer Rock is cursed.

Available at all three Friends Museum store locations; St. Clement's Island, Piney Point Lighthouse & the Old Jail Museum. Also available online with shipping through the Friends Museum Store. <https://friendsmuseumstore.square.site/>



Friends, your membership provides important funding for St. Mary's County Museum Division projects and events. We are committed to the support and enhancement of these sites which are vitally important to telling the story of Maryland. Thanks to your participation, the Friends sponsor and underwrite educational exhibits and assist in expanding museum collections. Your membership helps to fund community events such as Maryland Day and St. Clement's Island Heritage Day. The Friends also support bringing arts and culture to Southern Maryland by hosting community fundraising events such as the Potomac Jazz & Seafood Festival and Retro Fest on the Potomac. We depend on your support to preserve St. Mary's County history, so please renew your membership today!

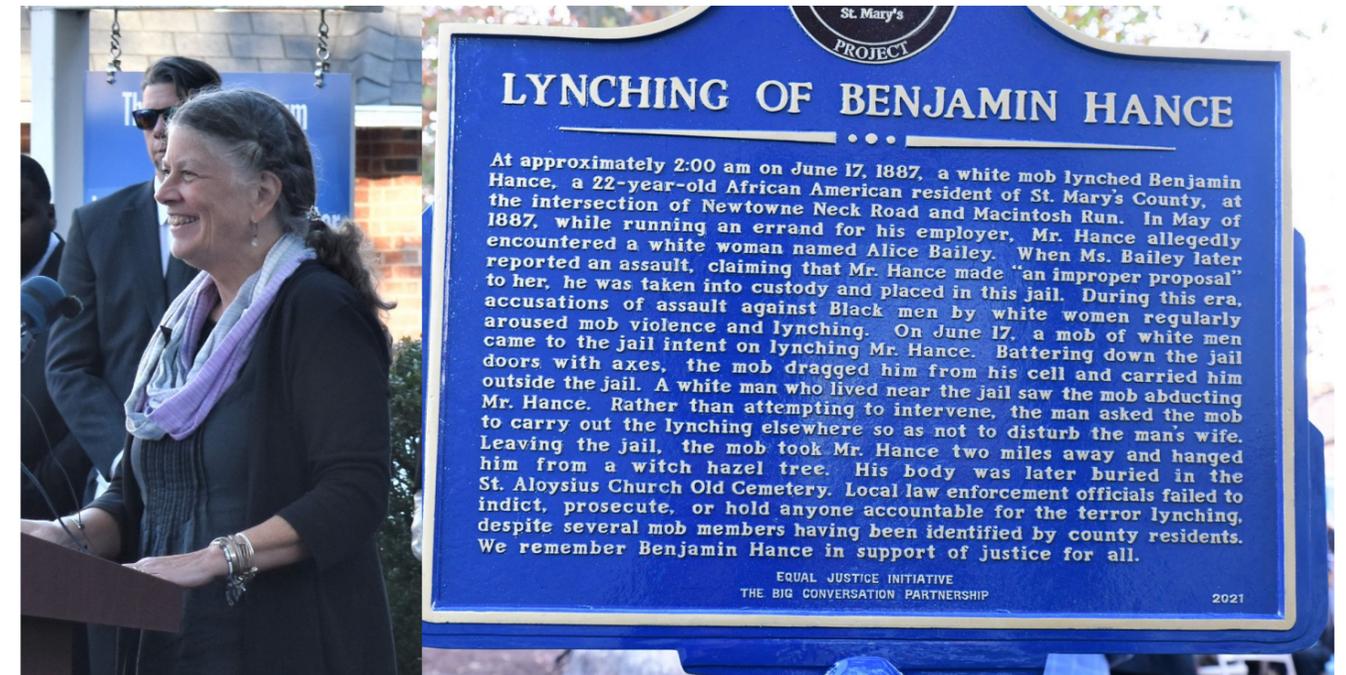
January 2022 Events at St. Clement's Island Museum

Multiple events are scheduled to happen at St. Clement's Island Museum in January before the old building is torn down and construction on the new building begins.

The Appraiser Fair will take place on January 22nd, 2022. You may have a hidden treasure in your attic or garage and not even know it! Visit with expert appraisers as they determine the value of your prized possessions at St. Clement's Island Museum. Appraisers for various types of items will be available at the museum. Only items that can be hand-carried will be appraised. Space is limited and items will be viewed on a first come, first serve basis. As of now, appraisers include those for fine arts, coins and currency. While admission is FREE, there are various small costs for item appraisals (Normally \$5 each; cash and check only). For the fine arts category, there is a two-item limit per person. This category may close early due to high attendance. Due to the popularity of this event, prepare for long waiting times.

On January 26th, there will be a **Neighborhood Preview of the New Building Plans at St. Clement's Island Museum** from 10 am to 3 pm. Enjoy light refreshments while browsing the plans for the new museum building before construction starts. This event is open to the general public and all are encouraged to attend!

Following the Neighborhood Preview on January 26th, St. Clement's Island Museum will host a St. Mary's County Chamber of Commerce **Business After Hours**. This event, entitled "The First Landing is Expanding" will be a last hoorah before the old museum building is replaced with a bigger structure on the same site. Prior registration with the Chamber of Commerce is required for this event.



2021-2022

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

November 1

Fall/Winter hours begin at all 3 museum sites

November 28

PPLM Holiday Open House
PPLM Holiday Exhibit begins

December 1

SCIM Christmas Doll and Train Exhibit begins

December 5

SCIM Holiday Open House

January 2

Holiday exhibits end at SCIM and PPLM

January 5

Appraiser Fair at SCIM

January 26

Neighborhood Preview of New Building Plans at SCIM

January 26

Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours at SCIM

February 11

Community Day at SCIM

March 25

Maryland Day at SCIM
Summer hours resume at all 3 museum sites

April 9

First Landing Wine and Arts Festival

April 23-24

Black Diamond Event Weekend and Ceremony



A letter from the Board President

Dear Friends,

It could probably go without saying that we are thankful we managed to execute a successful slate of “compliant” events over the past year satisfying the needs and expectations of many of our patrons and supporters wishing to return to the venues they love to visit and support. And it is with that continued support of our sponsors, patrons, benefactors and membership, along with the supporting cast of our Museum Division, that gives us the confidence to move into 2022 expecting nothing but the best.

And as for 2022, we will likely see one of the most significant contributions to the preservation of the story of the “First Landing” with the construction of the new St Clements Island Museum. By this time next year we expect to be well within reach of the finish line and the start of a new era for the Museum Division and the Friends at St Clements Island. Stay tuned...we think you will like what is coming...and you will want to be a part of it.

And finally...by the end of this year, we will be missing a familiar face and long-time “Friend” at the Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Historic Park as we say so long and best wishes to its Site Supervisor - April Havens when she retires (after 15 years) from the Museum Division. From my latter years employed at NuStar- Piney Point, through my time with the Board of Trustees and Friends Board, April has been the go to person when the job needed to get done. This was no more evident than when she filled the slot as Interim Museum Division Director during the extended search for and eventual hiring of Karen Stone. As with everything she did, April’s commitment to the task at hand and her vision of the “finish line” is why we can witness and celebrate the heritage, history and local stories captured and preserved at Piney Point today...thank you April!

Dale Springer, Board President

The Friends Are Awarded Two Covid-19 Relief Grants

In 2021, The Friends were awarded two Covid-19 grants that will help our organization overcome the financial losses incurred during the pandemic. On October 29th, Maryland Humanities announced that the Friends were one of only 90 organizations in the State of Maryland to be awarded a \$10,000 SHARP Recovery Fund Grant. Earlier in 2021, the Friends were awarded a sum of \$6,866 from St Mary’s County as part of the St. Mary’s County Nonprofit Relief Fund.

Thank you to the Commissioners of St. Mary’s County, St. Mary’s County Government, and Maryland Humanities for the much needed Covid-19 relief funds!



Friends,

What Southern Maryland Christmas and Holiday decorations do you remember as a child? We are putting together a permanent collection of vintage holiday decorations for Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Historic Park and we need your generous contributions. We are looking for:

Vintage Christmas ornaments

Vintage holiday and Christmas themed blow molds

Vintage miscellaneous decorations

Any and all items donated will become part of the museum’s collection and will be displayed each holiday season for all to enjoy. To donate, please contact Hillary at hillary.neben@stmarysmd.com. Thank you very much for your support!

2021 Holiday Events at St. Clement's Island Museum and Piney Point Lighthouse Museum

This Christmas season enjoy two fantastic holiday exhibits at the Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Historic Park and St. Clement's Island Museum!

At St. Clement's Island Museum, enjoy a holiday exhibit of antique and collectible dolls (like Barbie, American Girl and more), classic trains and other retro toys in this festive holiday display inside the museum. Write a letter to Santa and send it out at the mailbox at the museum. Find holiday books around the museum to read or try your hand at operating lots of model trains, and more!

At Piney Point Lighthouse, enjoy tours in a family friendly retro holiday exhibit inside the museum and keeper's quarters. This event is a fun visitor experience where you can see a very unique Christmas exhibit in the museum setting.

Unique Gifts in the Museum Store: complete your holiday shopping inside the Museum Store. We've got a ton of unique, local items for everyone on your list, including our NEW unique Moll Dyer ornament, made especially for the 2021 holiday season.

ST. CLEMENT'S ISLAND MUSEUM
Christmas Doll & Train Exhibit
 DEC. 1, 2021 - JAN. 2, 2022, 12PM - 4PM
 Exhibit runs daily except for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.
 Enjoy a holiday exhibit of antique and collectible dolls (like Barbie, American Girl and more), classic trains and other retro toys in this festive holiday display inside the museum.
 Complete your HOLIDAY SHOPPING inside the Museum Store with affordable art, jewelry, books and other local items, perfect for everyone on your list!
 ADMISSION COST: \$3.00 Adults, \$2.00 Seniors and Military, \$1.50 Children, 5 and under Free.

PINEY POINT LIGHTHOUSE MUSEUM
a VERY RETRO CHRISTMAS
 DAILY 12PM - 4PM
 NOV. 28, 2021 - JAN. 2, 2022
 except for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

OUR EXHIBIT KICKS OFF WITH A FREE HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE!
 NOON - 4 PM
 Nov. 28, 2021
 Our Holiday Open House will feature family activities, refreshments, and more...
 Find unique gifts in the museum store!
Family Fun!
 NOON - 4 PM, December 5, 2021
 Enjoy children's activities, music and other holiday fun at the museum. Get a jump on your holiday shopping at the Museum Store.

OUR EXHIBIT KICKS OFF WITH A FREE HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE!
 NOON - 4 PM
 Nov. 28, 2021
 Our Holiday Open House will feature family activities, refreshments, and more...
 Find unique gifts in the museum store!
Take a Tour!
Retro Holiday Exhibits from the 40s to the 70s
 Enjoy tours in a family friendly retro holiday exhibit inside the museum and keeper's quarters. This event is a fun visitor experience where you can see a very unique Christmas exhibit in the museum setting.

Kathy Norris Boat Donation to the Friends

Kathy Norris, wife of the late Joseph (Fuzzy) Norris, Jr., has generously agreed to donate two boats to the Friends of St. Clement's Island and Piney Point Museums. Both boats once belonged to noted waterman and beloved St. Mary's County citizen Fuzzy Norris. The Friends are extremely grateful and excited to take possession of the boats and are planning on turning both boats into hands-on, interactive children's playscapes. One boat will be located at St. Clement's Island Museum and the other at Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Historic Park for children to play on. Both boats are currently located at Dennis Point Marina but will be relocated to the museums and refurbished as to be child safe and family friendly.



Fuzzy's main love was being on or around the water; whether it was with the family at Lake Anna, VA, oystering on the Potomac, hauling and repairing boats and jet skis at Dennis Point Marina, and Campground, or driving his race boats. For over 25 years Fuzzy tonged for oysters in the Potomac River and its tributaries. He participated in workboat races with his restored "Kathy J" at Swann's Pier in Piney Point. As a member of the St. Mary's County Watermen's Association he shared his knowledge of oyster tonging at the Blessing of the Fleet at Colton's Point. In 2011, Fuzzy was named St. Mary's County Waterman of the year during the Blessing of the Fleet. (Courtesy of the Baynet.com). Thanks to Kathy's very generous donation, Fuzzy and his boats will be memorialized at the museums for all to enjoy for many years to come.

A Farewell to April Havens, Site Manager at Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Historic Park for 15 Years

This November will mark the last month that April Havens will serve Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Historic Park after a career of 15 years as the Site Supervisor. Many of our readers may know and recognize her as she has been an integral part of the Museum Division staff and the face of Piney Point during her tenure. She loved sharing the exhibits and historic buildings at Piney Point with the general public and was known for her ready smile, fantastic site tours, and rapport with staff, volunteers, and neighbors on Lighthouse Road.

April started her career with St. Mary's County Museum Division in 2006 after she retired from the park service. Previously she was the Park Manager of Point Lookout State Park Complex, Department of Natural Resources. At Piney Point April oversaw many changes over the years – including the most recent renovations and the completion of the newest exhibits in the main museum building.

During her time with the Museum Division, April led the programming at Piney Point Lighthouse and hosted numerous events and programs over the years. On Pirate Day, April was always ready and prepared to play the part of a pirate and engage younger audiences with her wit and charm. April loved doing paper plate and cup lighthouse crafts in celebration of National Lighthouse Weekend and was instrumental in obtaining a replica Fresnel Lens exhibit at Piney Point. April decorated Piney Point for the holidays each year and hosted the Piney Point Christmas Open House, among other events.

“April's time at Piney Point saw floods by the dozens, and plenty of minor emergencies with heating oil, sump pump failings, and the loss of electricity and internet, but in every incident she rose to the occasion and kept the site safe for staff and visitors. April helped oversee the transformation of the main museum building into the wonderful exhibit building it is today and has kept the light shining in the lighthouse for all to see. Her leaving opens a new chapter for both Piney Point and her, and I wish her well as she continues her life's journey,” said Museum Division Manager Karen Stone.

Jayne Walsh, Friends Museum Store Manager, noted, “April and I shared so many great times at Piney Point Lighthouse Museum; Pirate Days, Lighthouse Challenges, Holiday Open Houses, even a yard sale at Piney Point. Our passion for all things vintage led to developing Retro Fest & Vintage Christmas displays. April's dedication to the museums and preserving St. Mary's County History is evident in the new exhibits she was instrumental in creating. Her legacy will be shared with visitors for years to come. I will miss Capt'n Havens but wish her the very best in her retirement. She is a friend for life.”

“Captain Havens, we have sailed in fair winds. We have sailed in stormy seas. I won't forget the great adventures we shared during our 15 year voyage. May you enjoy your retirement and more Jimmy Buffett concerts. Cheers, Captain Barbour of the SMCGRPMD St. Clement's” noted St. Clement's Island Museum Site Manager Christina Barbour.

April Havens will be sorely missed and we wish her all the best going forward as she embarks on a new chapter in her life.



THE FINER POINTS



Photos courtesy of Wes Stone Photography

THE FINER POINTS